

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

TRIBUTE TO THE CHOPIN SINGING SOCIETY

HON. BILL PASCRELL, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 20, 2010

Mr. PASCRELL. Madam Speaker, I would like to call to your attention the work of an accomplished choral group, The Chopin Singing Society, that is celebrating its 100th anniversary of creating beautiful music and inspiring the Polish community of New Jersey and the surrounding area.

It is only fitting that The Chopin Singing Society be honored in this, the permanent record of the greatest democracy ever known, for the artistic musical group has done much to help Polish-Americans and the community at large understand the rich tradition of Polish music while also celebrating American classics. The deep reverence of the Society's members for their heritage helps to enrich the multicultural tapestry of the District I represent.

The Chopin Singing Society #182 Polish Singers Alliance of America of Passaic, NJ, is one of the oldest independent male choral groups active in the United States. The Society was officially organized on March 10, 1910, in honor of the 100th anniversary of Fryderyk Chopin's birth. The choral group's first Musical Director was Edmund A. Sennert.

The Society's first performance was a commemorative program honoring Polish patriots who fought and died in the 1830 revolt against Russian occupation. When World War I began, 75 percent of the chorus joined the newly organized American Legion of the Polish Army. After the Armistice, the chorus reorganized and one of its first accomplishments was to appear in the American performance of Giuseppe Verdi's opera, eleven *Trovatore*, starring Giovanni Martinelli.

In 1997 and 1998 the Society was the featured choir with the Jimmy Sturr Christmas Show tour appearing at Felician College, Lodi, New Jersey, and in theaters in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, Middletown, New York, Springfield, Massachusetts, Easton, Pennsylvania, and the Taj Mahal in Atlantic City. The choir has achieved the highest score at international choral competitions of the Polish Singers Alliance of America, PSAA. In doing so, the choir has been awarded the traveling Cardinal Hlond Trophy and maintains the distinction of being the only chorus to win the trophy three times, twice in succession.

The choir prides itself in having in its repertoire the ability to sing Polish, classical, folk and patriotic songs, a complete Latin Mass, as well as American classic and barber shop songs. The Society's busiest time of the year is the Christmas season, fulfilling requests to present its time-honored Polish Christmas concert and to appear as guest choir during the celebration of Mass at many churches throughout the Metropolitan area. The current musical director is Alicja Rusewicz-Pagorek.

The chorus has two recordings to its credit: *Polskie koledy* (Polish Christmas Carols) and

Songs of Poland, a mix of traditional Polish songs. This album (*Songs of Poland*) was remastered on to CD this year and is currently available. Also, this year, the chorus will introduce a new CD of traditional Polish Christmas carols. The success of the Chopin Singing Society stems from its members' dedication and desire to promote and maintain Polish culture through song.

The job of a United States Congressman involves much that is rewarding, yet nothing compares to learning about and recognizing the efforts of wonderful, thriving cultural groups such as The Chopin Singing Society.

Madam Speaker, I ask that you join the members of The Chopin Singing Society, all those whose lives have been culturally enriched throughout the years, and me in recognizing the outstanding contributions of The Chopin Singing Society to New Jersey's Eighth Congressional District community and beyond.

HONORING CARLOS BEDOLLA

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 20, 2010

Mr. RADANOVICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend and congratulate Carlos Bedolla upon being awarded with the "Lifetime Achievement Award" by the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Post 9896. Mr. Bedolla was honored on Saturday, January 30, 2010, in Chowchilla, California.

Mr. Carlos Bedolla was born in Gilroy, California, and graduated from Gilroy High School. In 1965, shortly after graduation, Mr. Bedolla was enlisted into the United States Army. He completed basic training at Fort Hood, Texas, and was sent to Virginia for advanced training. Mr. Bedolla was designated as an infantryman and was assigned to the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment at Fort Meade, Maryland. For several months the regiment took part in advanced unit training and in 1966 he boarded a ship in Oakland, California, for a 23-day voyage to Southeast Asia.

Upon arriving in Vietnam, Mr. Bedolla was assigned to the 2nd Squadron of the 11th Cavalry Regiment, the "Blackhorse Regiment." The regiment's mission was to conduct "search and destroy" operations on all Viet Cong and North Vietnam regular forces in their area of operation. They provided reconnaissance and security for the 101st and 173rd Airborne and supported several other units. Mr. Bedolla participated in two major operations: Iron Triangle and Junction City. Both operations focused on eliminating enemy strongholds and jungle clearing. It was during these operations that tunnel complexes were found containing tons of rice and supplies for enemy troops.

Mr. Bedolla served as an infantry squad leader and an armored personnel carrier track commander during operations. He directly pro-

vided reconnaissance for his unit and employed tactics to ensure the safety of his men.

Upon completing his tour in Vietnam, Sergeant Bedolla returned to the United States and was honorably discharged in April of 1967. For his service he was awarded the National Defense Service Medal, the Vietnam Service Medal, the Vietnam Campaign Medal with device, the Republic of Vietnam Unit Gallantry Cross with frame and palm, the Combat Infantryman's Badge, and the Army Sharpshooter Badge.

After his discharge, Mr. Bedolla returned to Gilroy, where he met and married his wife, Jessica. He was employed in the retail grocery industry as a store director for 34 years. Mr. and Mrs. Bedolla have 2 sons, 1 daughter, 11 grandchildren and 1 great-grandchild. Mr. Bedolla is a Life Member of Chowchilla Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 9896, the St. Columba Catholic Church and the Young Men's Institute.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend and congratulate Carlos Bedolla upon being named as a "Distinguished Life Member" by the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Post 9896. I invite my colleagues to join me in wishing Mr. Bedolla many years of continued success.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF FRANK MCCOY

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 20, 2010

Mr. COURTNEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize and celebrate the life and legacy of former Vernon, Connecticut, Mayor Frank J. McCoy. Frank passed away on Tuesday, April 6, 2010, at the age of 87.

Frank was a monumental figure in his beloved town of Vernon. His lifetime of public service began early, serving as an enlisted man in The U.S. Army for 3 years and attaining the rank of sergeant. As a medic, he saw combat in the European Theater of World War II and fought in the Battle of the Bulge. While this contribution alone would have enshrined him forever as a public hero, Frank chose to continue serving his community for decades.

After the war, Frank pursued his education. He graduated from Yale University in 1949 and the University of Connecticut School of Law in 1956. He practiced law for 54 years and served as attorney for the Vernon Fire District during its consolidation with the City of Rockville in forming the Town of Vernon. After two terms on the Vernon Town Council, Frank was first elected Mayor of Vernon in 1969, where he served three consecutive terms. In 1977, he was again elected to a fourth and final term and was the President of the Connecticut Conference of Mayors. Simultaneously, he somehow found time to work as a service officer for the Soldier Sailors Marine Fund for over 40 years helping wartime veterans who were in need of financial assistance.

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